

Some people think there's something absurd about race or gender being a social construct, but it's often based on false assumptions about social constructs.

For instance, this tweet says: "If, God forbid, schools implement Critical race theory in their classes, are they going to explain the part where "race is a social construct" to young children, and hence children can feel free to ignore everything they say about it?"

The inference here assumes:

(A) If X is a social construct, then we can/should ignore X.

But this is false. A social construct is just something that exists, or is the way that it is, *because* of human attitudes or interactions (like money). They can have significant effects within society that are worth addressing.

Here's another example: "There are a million genders" vs. "Gender is a social construct". The alleged inconsistency here is based on an assumption like:

(B) If Xs are socially constructed, then there can't be very many Xs.

But this is false—there's no reason to think there can't be many more social constructs than typically recognized within our society, given the diversity of possible human attitudes and interactions.

One more example: "Race is a social construct" vs. "Everything is racist". Here, the false assumption is something like:

(C) If X is a social construct, then discrimination or oppression based on X can't be extremely pervasive in society.

But nothing about social constructs entails their effects can't be pervasive.